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07 November 2018

Version of attached file:

Accepted Version

Peer-review status of attached file:

Peer-reviewed

Citation for published item:

Sheils, Barry (2015) 'W.B. Yeats and World Literature : the subject of poetry.', .

Further information on publisher's website:

<https://www.routledge.com/9781472425539>

Publisher's copyright statement:

This is an Accepted Manuscript of a book chapter - "Put into English': the monoglot translator and World English' - published by Routledge in W.B. Yeats and World Literature : the subject of poetry on 28 August 2015 available online: <http://www.routledge.com/9781472425539>

Additional information:

Sample chapter deposited: "Put into English': the monoglot translator and World English', pp. 101-130.

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Chapter 3: ‘Put into English’: The Monoglot

Translator and World Literature

Englishmen and Scotsmen forget how much they owe to mature traditions of all kinds – traditions of feeling, traditions of thought, traditions of expression – for they have never dreamed of life without these things. They write or paint or think or feel, and believe they do so to please no taste but their own, while in reality they obey rules and instincts which have been accumulating for centuries; their wine of life has been mellowed in ancient cellars, and they see but the ruby light in the glass. In a new country like Ireland – and English-speaking Ireland is very new – we are continually reminded of this long ripening by the immaturity of the traditions about us; if we are writers, for instance, we find it takes longer to learn to write than it takes an Englishman, and the more resolute we are to express the national character, and the more we understand the impossibility of putting our new wine in old bottles, the longer is our struggle with the trivial, the incoherent, the uncomely. (Yeats, *Uncollected Prose I* 361-2)

For a monoglot Yeats notched-up a surprising number of important translation credits. As well as the Irish folklore considered in the last chapter, and two late translations (of translations) of the Oedipus plays, he worked to improve Rabindranath Tagore’s translation of *Gitanjali* (1912), offered advice to Ezra Pound on the Ernest Fenollosa manuscript for the twin 1916 publications *Certain Noble Plays of Japan* and *Noh or Accomplishment: A Study of*

the classical Stage of Japan, and '[p]ut into English' a new abridged version of the *Upanishads* with Shri Purohit Swāmi (1937).¹ Since these were all works of adaptation or collaboration, we may be inclined to dismiss out of hand the notion that the English-fixated Yeats was a translator at all. However, it will be my argument in this chapter that the work of translation haunts the poet, not only as a self-professed Irish writer writing in English, but also as a writer cast upon the swelling tide of *world* English in the early-twentieth century.

I argue that in Yeats's Irish brand of English, intended for world consumption, we can hear a strange echo of Goethe's formative ambition for a World Literature. Goethe famously wrote to Thomas Carlyle of translators that they were engaged in a 'universal spiritual commerce'. Translation, he wrote, '[w]hatever one may say of [its] inadequacy [. . .] nonetheless remains one of the most essential tasks and one of the worthiest of esteem in the universal market of world trade'.² For Goethe an address from one linguistic culture to another, though liable to distortion, expresses a conventionally Kantian version of frictional sociability between subject nations. In Yeats's case, however, writing from the perspective of Irishness in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, it is a significantly different predicament: the perils of transmission do not lie between different languages, but within one hegemonic language containing multiple and mutually interfering cultural registers. When the impoverishment of not having a language of one's own to exchange becomes the condition of literary productivity, then we might say, with the modernists, that the world has changed. This change has been described by Franco Moretti as the transition from a situation where there are multiple world literatures, 'a mosaic of local cultures' which create new forms of writing by divergence, to the singular state of *Weltliteratur* (the world literary system) 'unified by the international literary market'. This market is characterised according to Moretti by 'a stunning amount of sameness', and 'its main mechanism of change is convergence'.³ Convergence as a 'mechanism of change' will be seen in this chapter to be an adroit description of the modernist paradox that finds an early form in Yeats's ideas of ancient non-English traditions which come to depend on translation into English for their life.

In Yeats's view, the English language, though born of the grandeur of Spenser, Shakespeare and Blake,⁴ is inclined to desiccation according to the rule of its imperial and administrative instrumentality, and requires poetic revivification from elsewhere - from Gaelic Ireland, but also from Ancient Greece, India and Bengal, China and Japan. This modern revivification of language has an important consequence: namely that what is considered ancient and traditional comes to be defined by its distance and the means of its transmission as much as by its spiritual content; and the inevitable language of its communication - English - comes to represent, through its contemporary fabrications, the explicit world of modern travel and trade. In this regard, Yeats's insatiable move towards the ancient cultures of the East must also be read as a simultaneous move West into the pristine New World of money and commodification, the dystopian end of which, for Yeats, was linguistic vitality without the poetic principle of form - exemplified in the perils of free verse, and its symptomatic 'egotism and indiscretion' (*E&I* 522). There is a correlative irony to be detected in the poet's longstanding resistance to writing free verse. When Yeats declared his faith in the more 'primitive' and poetic Asiatic traditions as they continued to live in the global 'present' of translated textuality - translations which most often appeared having abandoned native prosody - he was contributing to the dethroning of his own attempts at poetic formalism. The argument here is that the modern economic structure, which underlay Yeats's general linguistic predicament as an English language poet in a global age, consistently determined the contradictions of his poetic style.

Glossing the world: the impossibility of local English

In *Against World Literature* Emily Apter reminds us, via Giorgio Agamben's critical theology, that 'to gloss', from glossolalia, means to speak in tongues, as the Christian Apostles were said to have done. More precisely, and peculiarly, it means to communicate in languages other than one's own without understanding the words one is speaking. Whereas, ordinarily understood, the act of translation assumes exchange and correspondence between

particular references from different languages, the Pentecostal logic inherent in glossolalia replaces such particulars with a single universalising gesture. When the Apostles were granted linguistic mobility they effectively made all languages convergent upon one universal Word; and, though capable of inspired speech across all linguistic boundaries, they were at the same time incapable of *meaning* anything in particular.⁵

The assumption of a continuous global space to be traversed without friction by those in possession of a Pentecostal passport is a helpful way to start to think about the ascendancy of world English as the universalising medium of the twentieth century. We are no doubt mindful, thanks to the work of postcolonial critique, that the general meaning of the English language resides in its movement and circulation, and in the fact that it enacts a systematic convergence of other languages into English. Once we have acknowledged how the systematic privileging of English is inextricable from global economics, we can only regard an equitable exchange model of translation to be fatally idealistic – which of course has consequences for modern Anglophone poetry. Yeats's expressions of cultural difference are enduringly compromised by the formal universalism of his language. It will also be necessary to consider, however, how this is also a longstanding and constitutional problematic within the discipline of English Literature itself.

Look under 'English literature' in the encyclopaedia of the world, suggests Robert Crawford, and there you should find the word 'Scotland'.⁶ Crawford argues that English literature was a disciplinary invention of the Scottish university system in the eighteenth century; specifically, he contends that the discipline emerged as an attempt to facilitate the entry of the Scottish middle classes into London society through the formalised study of modern English, a facilitation considered to be a particularly urgent task due to the ambiguity of Scotland's linguistic and cultural identity in the wake of the Highland clearances. Crawford caps his argument by identifying this cultural pathology within the great texts of the Scottish Enlightenment: the middle classes' fear of being prejudged as 'primitive' – as belonging to a non-English linguistic culture – productively transformed itself into a philosophy arguing against the validity of all prejudice. This transformation occurred in part through the

anthropological inflections of writers such as Adam Smith, Dr John Moore and Tobias Smollet who assessed the manners of so-called primitive peoples (potentially the Scottish themselves) as at least worthy of translation and study; but also through the spirit of modern economics, the major premise of which was free exchange between economic partners unfettered by prejudice.⁷

By invoking its sister disciplines, anthropology and modern economics, Crawford's story of the development of English literature prepares the ground for the study of a global style. The anthropological subject of English literature was confronted ab-originally with the task of cultural translation: most commonly with the task of translating the experience of the primitive Celt and the (even more) primitive American Indian. In this construction of a convergent world whereby diverse materials from various foreign cultures received their articulation through the combined disciplinary regime of English, Anthropology, and Economics, a reflexive question emerged concerning the possibility of an 'outside'. To what extent could meaningful cultural difference be apprehended without succumbing to the representational strategies of what became 'official' English literature? In Crawford's account, the response to this problem is vernacular literature, the further dialectical turn through which Scotland gained a measure of revenge against the discipline it created. Negotiating the task of cultural translation from *within* the discipline of English literature, vernacular literature attempts to marry verisimilitude – language as it is spoken by a minority culture – with the disciplinary conventions of an editorial gloss. Crawford notes how this bind is reflected in Walter Scott's *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* whose *seuils* and paratextes demonstrate how dialect is forever shadowed and determined by anthropological explanation.⁸ As with Macpherson's Celtic style – his 'translatorese' – so it was with Walter Scott's Scottish songs and fictions: they were treated with a mix of cultural pride and political suspicion. Though vernacular literature might have been understood to expand the terms of English, ultimately it could only ever stage, rather than resolve, the problem of inter-linguistic reference.

And so vernacular literature remains today a fundamentally two-faced phenomenon, and in need of careful evaluation. Is it the expression of a local form of English claiming to be more ‘natural’ than ‘official’ English literature, or is it a gesture straining at the boundary of English expression towards other non-English languages which have been suppressed, forgotten and over-written? In other words, does vernacular claim to be a naturalisation of ‘English’ at a local level, or its denaturalisation as a global phenomenon? This is the interminable predicament which confronted Yeats in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. Despite his folkloric themes, occasional echoing of Irish syntax, and longstanding interest in representing the speech of ‘the people themselves’, Yeats can hardly be called a vernacular poet. His stated appreciation for other writers’ use of vernacular, including that of Robbie Burns, his own collaborators Gregory and Synge, and the Scottish modernist Hugh MacDiarmid, registers his interest in vernacular English, but also, inevitably, points up the limitations of his own practice. This may be put down to his talents lying elsewhere – perhaps Yeats just didn’t have the ear for local speech patterns or the ability to draw these out synthetically. But equally it suggests his formative resistance to the naturalistic assumptions which so often accompany vernacular writing.⁹

This is not to say that vernacular literature simply *is* naturalistic. Matthew Hart’s reading of the ‘synthetic vernacular’ which in the context of the early twentieth century signalled ‘a poet’s attempt to sublate the tension between local languages and [. . .] modernism’s late imperial engagement with the non-Occidental world’ seems entirely correct; and, to be sure, there are plentiful examples of Irish, Scottish, Welsh, American and indeed English poems where non-standard grammars and dialect words are combined with arcane, antique or foreign language vocabularies to uncanny effect.¹⁰ Yet, even if we admit that this accumulation of vernacular modernisms suggests a general erosion of imperial sovereignty whose imagined articulation is through an official literary language of Englishness, there is no guarantee that any particular example of vernacular literature escapes the predictability of regional cliché. Stylistic innovation will not be easily parsed from mimicking a regional accent or relying on faux antiquarianism; nor will anthropological comparison remain entirely

distinct from global commodification or kitsch. With this difficulty in mind, Yeats's caution with respect to the vernacular may prove salutary: it is not only the means by which the discipline of English literature fractures – localised speech challenging a centralised literary style – but also the means by which that discipline puts itself back together again by organising differences according to a familiar set of metaphysical values: 'the ordinary', 'nature', 'tradition' and 'common sense'.

Yeats marks this suspicion of vernacular through his repeated criticisms of Wordsworth which, though surely unfair to the reflective complexities and tensions of Wordsworth's poetry, return consistently to the question of poetic style. Wordsworth is 'flat and heavy' because 'his moral sense has no theatrical element, it is an obedience, a discipline which he has not created' (*M* 151); and he is 'a descendent of Rousseau' who makes 'a constant resolution to dwell upon good only' (*Ex* 275). In summary, Wordsworth lacks style because through his Platonic recollections of childhood and excursions into 'nature' he elides due consideration of the estranging art of his constructions. In 'A General Introduction for my Work' under the section entitled 'Style and Attitude', Yeats returns to Wordsworth once more: 'It was a long time before I had made a language to my liking', he writes. 'I began to make it when I discovered some twenty years ago that I must seek, not as Wordsworth thought, words in common use, but a powerful and passionate syntax, and a complete coincidence between period and stanza' (*E&I* 521-2). This refers less to Wordsworth's poetry than to his preface to *Lyrical Ballads* in which the poet claims to find in 'humble and rustic life' a 'plainer and more emphatic', even a more 'philosophical', language.¹¹ Yeats's contrasting emphasis on the contortions of a poetic language (a 'passionate syntax') restores the process of artful mediation to the discovery of nature. It is a point he rehearsed from Coleridge whose *Biographia Literaria* devotes whole sections to recovering Wordsworth's art from amidst his metaphysical sentiment. The problem, as Coleridge defined it, was that Wordsworth's claim to have copied ordinary speech did not distinguish between the naturalness of 'reality' and the apparent naturalness of poetic representations of reality.¹² It is only by recognising this difference, the non-identity of the subject's picture of nature with

nature itself, that the process of poetic idealisation is restored to the words on the page, and the poetic task rightly distinguished from that of recording objective commonplaces. By secreting his idealism within his naturalistic presentation of rustic life, Wordsworth omits to reflect upon the artificial dimension of his poetry. It is this omission which renders him a problematic presence for Yeats: Wordsworth the ‘nature poet’ of common language is inferentially the poet of the English state from whom the Irish poet must distinguish his vitality; in the same way as from state-bound morality he must distinguish a ‘national’ style, and from a commonplace word a dramatic utterance.

Going forward, then, we should be clear that Yeats’s is not an outright rejection of vernacular literature, but rather an emphatic corroboration of its literary provenance. When advising prospective Abbey playwrights in 1909, he was adamant that they should not be ‘too anxious to write in an Irish way’ and that they should consider the formal exigencies of plot over the naturalism of dialogue. Goethe’s maxim that ‘a work of art, though it must have the effect of nature, is art because it is not nature’ helped him consolidate this perspective, even on the most ancient matter of ‘living speech [sic]’ – the performance of which he deemed a difficult feat of artifice (*CL Intellex* 1101, 1909). Yeats’s intellectual preference for the ‘world’ of Goethe over the England of Wordsworth was consolidated through his relation with his father’s friend, the chair of English Literature at Trinity College Dublin, E Dowden, who had written on Goethe and worked on a translation of the German poet’s *East-West Divan*. According to Yeats it was Dowden’s abandonment of his study of Goethe in favour of Wordsworth when confronted with the displeasure of an archbishop which had damned him to provincialism: the same provincialism, indeed, which led Dowden to cast aspersions on the Irish Revival.¹³ In this light, and by reference to the order and theatricality of Goethe’s personality, Yeats was determined to make Irish literature a world matter.

The critic Michael Golston is right to point out in Yeats’s consistent disavowals of poetic technique in favour of a naturalised conception of ‘rhythm’ – and in particular rhythm affiliated to the vital life of the Irish people – the implication of a profound bodily, even racial, unconscious resistant to the mechanical muse of modernity. But such rhetoric does not

obviate entirely the process of self-conscious construction.¹⁴ It was Goethe's lesson of 'construction' which led Yeats to declare that he had abandoned modern subjectivity for 'contemporary words and syntax' (L 892).¹⁵ Yeats was adamant that artful construction and contemporary rhythm belong together. And he gives a precise example of how this works in practice when conceiving of a modern 'passionate prose' which crosses and disrupts, but also ironically preserves for use the traditional pentameter line. No longer can one speak the first line of Milton's *Paradise Lost*, emphasise each of the five iambic feet, and remain unselfconscious, he explains; but one can propose a modern rhythmic adaptation of the same line in which there are four as opposed to five stresses. In 'blank verse' the line scans as follows: 'Of mán's first dísobédience ánd the frúit'. But in modern recitation ('passionate prose') it is this: 'Of mán's first disobédience and the frúit' or 'Of mán's first dísobedience and the frúit' (E&I 524). The intricacy of this position demands attention since it requires a simultaneous invocation and abrogation of prosody. The line is measured as it is no longer naturally spoken – indeed measured by Yeats who claimed of prosody that it was 'the subject of which [he was] most ignorant' (L 896). At the same time, it is spoken anew in contravention of the accepted prosodic rule. The apparent naturalism which underlies the poet's contemporary 'passionate prose' depends on the transformation of an unselfconscious traditional measure into an estranging art of counting and adapting the stress pattern so that a five stress line is *and* is no longer a five stress line: the pentameter line is a haunted structure, sustaining within the mouths of self-consciously modern poets the 'ghostly voice' of the traditional past: 'vivid speech' (E&I 524). The particular ghost of the poet Gerard Manley Hopkins informs this insight, with Robert Bridges, who Yeats credits with the term 'contrapuntal structure', responsible for introducing Hopkins's theories of sprung rhythm and counterpoint to the literary world in 1918.¹⁶ Crucially, for the terms of our present discussion, in his reading of the Milton line Yeats is using one kind of poetic naturalism to qualify another: the traditional line is qualified by the spirit of free verse ('passionate prose') and vice versa, with the resulting effect of modern poetic 'rhythm' or 'passion' requiring always an act of subterfuge – an act of concealing one poetic voice inside another.

Edward Said has spoken of understanding various writers and works of world literature contrapuntally: 'that is, as figures whose writing travels across temporal, cultural and ideological boundaries in unforeseen ways to emerge as part of a new ensemble along with later history and subsequent art.'¹⁷ Yeats admits such complex procedures of circulation and reception into the artistic process itself: not only does the act of reading Milton's line against the grain of its naturalised stress pattern become an ironic way of preserving its relevance, but it also suggests the possibility of new poetic compositions in which a traditional line or stanza becomes a theatre of political difference and conflict. The traditional line houses the modern poetic spirit but cannot constitute its home. The refugee quality of Yeats's 'vivid speech', changing what yet 'seems' traditional, reflects back upon the qualities of vernacular literature where the rhythms of living speech infer a heterogeneity smuggled within an apparently homogeneous expression of local culture. We saw in the last chapter how foreign elements deposited within ostensibly native material gave Yeats's folklore its essential textual qualities, alerting us to the procedures of displacement by which the Irish peasant was produced. In a similar fashion, the question of the Hiberno-English vernacular always already contained within it the question of translation: it was never a simple matter of copying local Irish speech in English but of detecting within such reported speech a potential non-relation between the form its expression took and the content it was supposed to represent (i.e. a non-English language). The image and sound of Yeats's Ireland was menaced as well as produced by the exoticism within it.

The Eastern Commodity

When Yeats advised the Cuala Press to publish both Tagore's *The Post Office* (1914) and Fenollosa and Pound's *Certain Noble Plays of Japan* (1916) as part of its *national* catalogue, it was as if to test the hypothesis that Asia was Irish. No doubt an example of the commodification of 'the East', this publication strategy nonetheless established an important alliance between distinctly non-English *English* literatures. With Irish literature in English

explicitly linked to English translations of Bengali and Japanese texts, we have at once the evidence for a burgeoning canon of world literature in English and the prospect of a renewed self-consciousness with respect to World English's glossarial practices – the ways in which English metabolises foreign material within its own universalising economy.

In our preceding discussion of vernacular literatures in English, we noted the tendency towards naturalising the 'local' and overlooking its 'exotic' provenance. By their strategic and inevitably political marriage of characteristically vernacular and 'local' Irish literature in English to literature that is undeniably global and 'exotic' these Cuala publications draw our attention to an important continuity regarding the persistent question of translation. Irish literature written in English *infers* the act of translation which Tagore's *Gitanjali* or Fenollosa's manuscripts exemplify. Whilst it is fair to say that Yeats did not consistently articulate this connection, the process of absorbing other cultures into English and rendering particular cultural references as gestures within the theatre of English-language universalism is one that Yeats was reflexively implicated in – especially through his many and renowned turns towards the East. It seems to me that conventional attempts to detect the *influence* of 'eastern thought' on his poetry are liable to misread the historical complexity and profound superficiality of this theatre of the poet's cultural engagements with a commodified and translated Asian imaginary. Bluntly put, the project of discerning the influence of the philosophy of the *Upanishads* in Yeats's Byzantium poems, say, or of Zen Buddhism in his 'A Dialogue of Self and Soul' or 'Long-legged Fly', cannot do justice to the relation of a western author to eastern traditions within the context of colonial exploitation. And even where the case is made that Yeats uses his Irishness to cultivate a complex of non-exploitative cultural relations within the global semi-periphery – with ancient Indian religions, or Japanese drama – the historical meaning attributable to this relation derives as much from the creation of a global literary space in English, as it does from the reception of poetic 'wisdom' from a foreign culture.

Yeats ventured imaginatively to Asia often throughout his career, going so far as to claim that 'until the battle of the Boyne, Ireland belonged to Asia'. And its modern political malformations notwithstanding, Ireland remained in the poet's eyes sympathetic with the 'ancient' cultures of India, Japan, China and Persia.¹⁸ Of these cultures, India was perhaps the most longstanding of Yeats's anthropological reference points, its various religions and literatures facilitating several iterations of his orientalist desire. Originally influenced by the Theosophy movement, and in particular by the visit of comparative mythographer and 'expert' in Indian religions Mohini Chatterjee to Dublin, Yeats wrote a series of Indian poems as early as 1885: 'Anashuya and Vijaya', 'The Indian upon God' and 'The Indian to His Love'. These lyrics might fairly be characterised as juvenilia, at best minor contributions to a romantic poetic tradition, and a dilute of the spirit exemplified by Percy Bysshe Shelley's 'poet' in *Alastor* whose venture to India and return to the Caucasus modelled the Romantic movements of cultural projection and appropriation. And yet we can say that 'The Indian to his Love' retains the reader's interest for its reflections upon the narcissism of adventure: 'A parrot sways upon a tree, / Raging at his own image in the enamelled sea' (*VP* 77-78). Significantly, Yeats's first Indian, and notional representative of the East, is unwittingly combined with Robinson Crusoe, ensign of the Utopian West: we find him on a desert Island, marooned 'under quiet bows apart', 'his vapoury footsole by the water's drowsy blaze'. The new and the ancient coincide in the double-bind of the poet's worldly predicament.

Yeats's later claim in 'Ireland and the Arts' (1903) 'that he had rid himself of 'Shelley's Italian light' in order to find his own Irish style was only ever a complicated half-truth, since so often he continued to find Ireland outside of itself and in climates more unfamiliar than the Italian. In the same essay he writes: 'I would have Ireland re-create the ancient arts, the arts as they were understood in Judea, in India, in Scandinavia, in Greece and Rome, in every ancient land; as they were understood when they moved a whole people and not a few people who have grown up in a leisured class and made this understanding their business' (*E&I* 206). If Yeats did supplant Shelley's influence it wasn't by eschewing exoticism, though it may have been by changing its complexion. He met the Bengali poet

Rabindranath Tagore for the first time in William Rothenstein's house in London in June 1912, a poetic encounter I shall return to in more detail later in this chapter. Suffice it to say for now that no matter how he preferred to cast Tagore's work as representative of Bengal's 'supreme culture', or an 'unbroken' tradition (*E&I* 390), Yeats's collaboration with Tagore necessitated a more historically situated conception of the East. Yeats became subject to India through Tagore, and appropriately sensitive to its political and literary affinities with a semi-peripheral vision of Ireland. The spiritual power of Tagore's work, in particular its self-confident Indian-ness, offered him, he wrote, 'a moral that would be valuable [. . .] in Ireland'.¹⁹

The third major iteration of Yeats's Indian interest, beyond Chatterjee and Tagore, came about through his collaborative translation of the *Upanishads* with Shri Purohit Swāmi published in 1937. Once more, while promising 'vast sentiments and generalisations' in line with the deep religious sensibilities of the East, familiar to both romantic and modernist anthropological traditions, Yeats found the work's most characteristic note in the idea of Ireland as Asiatic:

It pleases me to fancy that when we turn towards the East, in or out of church, we are turning not less to the ancient West and North; the one fragment of pagan Irish philosophy come down, 'the Song of Amergin' seems Asiatic; that a system of thought like that in these books, though perhaps less perfectly organised, once overspread the world, as ours today; that our genuflections discover in that East something ancestral in ourselves, something we must bring into the light before we can appease a religious instinct that for the first time in our civilization demands the satisfaction of the whole man. ('Introduction' to *The Ten Principal Upanishads*)²⁰

The primitivism advocated in this passage permits two significantly different interpretations. The first we might characterise as broadly fascist since by discovering in the East something

ancestral in 'ourselves' Yeats allows, in a stately Hegelian tradition, that it is only 'we' occidentals of the west and north who are able to take an active part in history. In this case, the 'supreme culture' of Tagore's Bengal is distinguished for historical use by Europeans in the service of constructing a modern national identity. In like fashion, when Yeats finds in the adventure plots of the Japanese Noh the same 'sense of awe that our Gaelic-speaking country people will sometimes show when you speak to them of castle Hackett or of some holy well (*E&I* 232), and in 'Sato's sword' a changeless heritage which can lend moral strength to a 1920s Ireland fallen into disarray (*VP* 421), he defines a religious and martial unconscious, which although it doesn't simply belong to Ireland, can be powerfully acknowledged from the Irish perspective. The peculiar virtue of an ancient tradition which ostensibly resides outside of history is that it can be appropriated and then rediscovered *within* history, promising a profoundly modern sense of authenticity. The paradoxically nationalist internationalism which came to typify European fascism in the 1920s and 30s relied upon such strategies of cultural appropriation and forced similitude, so that under a cover of 'ancientness' an authoritative political sovereignty could be devised. Yeats's identifications with eastern cultures have often been read in this light as a means for granting Ireland's initially minoritarian political identity a racially supremacist character; indeed, as evidence of this ideological inclination it has become conventional to cite Yeats's unhappily remembered phrase 'Still the indomitable Irishry' which he intended to describe those who would not forget the formal lessons of ancient traditions as might be exemplified equally by Japanese prints or Chinese poetry (*VP* 640).

It is indisputable that Yeats borrows both from romantic orientalist traditions and from proto-fascist occultist traditions of representation, yet the idea that his transnationalism is one-note fascism remains too simplistic. In fact, I would like to argue that the second characterisation of Yeats's global primitivism is disruptive rather than fortifying to such a modern ideology. As much as Yeats relies upon the historically transient idea of ancientness in order to support an Irish subjectivity capable of withstanding the modern world, he also makes conspicuous the modern processes with which this subjectivity is fabricated.

‘Ancientness’, though ostensibly signalling a narrow temporal channel from the present to the past, also opens a network of geographic transmissions and translations which disrupt and dislocate singular expressions of culture. For instance, it is far from being the case that Yeats’s appropriation of the Japanese Noh was a bringing home of foreign materials to Ireland. On the contrary, introducing his Noh plays in 1916, he prompts the reader to consider the necessary cultural dislocations upon which the contemporary production of ancientness rests:

I have been elaborating my play in London where alone I can find the help I need, Mr. Dulac’s mastery of design and Mr. Ito’s genius of movement; yet it pleases me to think I am working for my own country [Ireland]. Perhaps some day a play in the form I am adapting for European purposes may excite once more, whether in Gaelic or in English, under the slope of Slieve-na-mon or Croagh Patrick, ancient memories; for this form has no need of scenery that runs away with money nor of a theatre building. (*E&I* 236)

Although it pleases the poet to think ‘he is working for his own country’, London provides the scene for Yeats’s eastern encounter. But it is not only the displacement of the Irish national imaginary within the English metropolis which disrupts the fantasy of directly expressing an ancient tradition; it is also the celebration of ‘Mr Dulac’s mastery of design’ and ‘Mr Ito’s genius of movement.’ Dulac was a renowned illustrator of the *Arabian Nights* as well as a theatre, costume and stamp designer, whose mastery here is credited with organising the Japanese materials for the modern stage – especially by rejuvenating the ‘beauty of the mask’. ‘Mastery of design’ as a means of linking ‘European purposes’ to ‘ancient memories’ tellingly recalls that overdetermined crux between the Apollonian structure and the Dionysian primitive from the *Birth of Tragedy*, in the cradle of which lay the terms of European art’s decadence and potential rehabilitation.

The enigma provided by the dancer Micho Ito consists in the fact that although he was Japanese, he had not performed the Noh except in Europe where he was forging a career as an experimental, modernist dancer – in fact, he was said to find ‘nothing more boring than the Noh’.²¹ This non-native choreography is of a piece with the demonstrative folding and unfolding of the cloth which became such a distinctive feature of Yeats’s ceremonial theatre, but was entirely foreign to Noh as it had been performed in Japan.²² The equivocation with which Yeats goes on to imagine revitalising European culture is the result of his having exposed ancientness to the structural means of its production in the present: his radicalised theatre – radicalised as a consequence of modern economic exigencies – will be performed in Gaelic *or* in English and under the slope of Slieve-na-mon *or* Croagh Patrick. As well as conforming to Yeats’s habitual concession to Douglas Hyde and the Gaelic League, such undecidability of language and location performs a modern imperative: the local must fissure to communicate with the world. Yeats continues accordingly: ‘my writings if they be seaworthy will be put to sea, and I cannot tell where they may be carried by the wind. Are not faery-stories of Oscar Wilde, which were written for Mr. Ricketts and Mr. Shannon and for a few ladies, very popular in Arabia?’ (*E&I* 237). The freedom of writing is associated with the mobility of travel and the unpredictability of its address. At both the stage of production and of distribution and consumption, writing is defined by its global circulation. This corresponds with a point made by Michael Hamburger that modernist poetry was peculiarly concerned with the afterlife of the literary object - questions of audience, critical reception, and market sales become explicit themes *within* modernist poetry. Taking for his primary example, Ezra Pound’s lines from *Lustra* (1916) (‘I beg you my friendly critics, / Do not set about to procure me an audience), Hamburger writes: ‘The convention of the *envoi*, the poet’s valediction to his poem is modernised in a way that reveals not only Pound’s preoccupation with the poet-critic-reader relationship but a self-consciousness scarcely preceded in poetry of any period. The effect is the opposite of that attained by writers of “pure” or “absolute” poetry’.²³ In Yeats’s corpus, as well as ‘A Fisherman’ which considers the needful invention of a modern audience, we might consider ‘A Coat’ where the poet rails against the fools who wore

his song ‘in the world’s eyes / As though they’d wrought it’, or even ‘Easter 1916’ which concerns itself with the challenges of cultural reception (*VP* 320). This phenomenon is due, we are bound to think, to an increasing convergence between the modes of artistic production and the artwork’s reception in global terms: the artist, no less than the critic, is projected into heterogeneous world-space which demands reference to displaced material, always originating in some reputed *elsewhere*.

The seminal expression of this modernist phenomenon, connecting linguistic expression to the fate of transferred global material, lies not with Pound, but with Charles Baudelaire who articulates the link between poetics and global commodity circulation in his essay on the *Exposition Universelle* of 1855.²⁴ Consider a modern Winckelmann, Baudelaire suggests, nominating the exemplary adjudicator of classical European beauty (Johann Joachim Winckelmann was the German art critic and aesthetician of the eighteenth century most associated with Hellenism and the study of the forms of Greek Art): ‘what would he say, if faced with a product of China - something weird, strange, distorted in form, intense in colour, and sometimes delicate to the point of evanescence?’²⁵ The implied answer is that the canonically-minded Winckelmann, unable to perceive its aesthetic qualities, would likely say nothing kind. A foreign object lacking the solidity and line of Greek statuary presents a fundamental challenge to the conventions of European aesthetics: a challenge, suggests Baudelaire, which can only be met through a transformation of subjectivity:

In order for [the Chinese object] to be understood it is necessary for the critic, for the spectator, to work a transformation in himself which partakes the nature of a mystery – it is necessary for him, by means of a phenomenon of the will acting upon the imagination, to learn of himself to participate in the surroundings which have given birth to this singular flowering. Few men have the divine grace of *cosmopolitanism* in its entirety; but all can acquire it in different degrees.²⁶

The Kantian understanding of cosmopolitanism – one sovereign subject entering into a sociable antagonism with another sovereign subject – remains as the backdrop to Baudelaire's essay, formalised through the *Exposition's* status as an artistic competition between European nations. Yet there is an important sense in which Baudelaire's vision stands also as a riposte to Kant. For the poet the encounter with the non-European object demands of the cosmopolitan a perverse will to surrender his sovereignty so that he might escape the 'aesthetic punditry' of the nationalist, as well as the overbearing pedagogy of the systemiser. Such divine grace is difficult to secure, however, and no matter how admirable this non-systematic openness to what is strange may seem to be, we should not lose sight of the fact that it is determined by – is a response to – an expanding global market (which has its own systemising logic). Standing in the vanguard of economic modernity, Baudelaire effectively substitutes the relation between sovereign states with the commodity relation. 'No scholastic veil. No university paradox, no academic utopia has intervened between [the cosmopolitan] and the complex truth', he writes, inferring, alongside the suspension of rationalised self-interest, the suspension of knowledge and of the philosophy of 'progress'.²⁷ The product of China is not to be judiciously interpreted or extensively studied, but rather theatrically encountered, aesthetically experienced, and ultimately, in one way or another, consumed. It is noteworthy indeed that Baudelaire has conjured the East in the form of a consumable object – 'delicate' and 'evanescent' – rather than as an eternal otherness *out there* beyond the boundary of Europe. As a foreign and fugitive object which transgresses sovereign national borders, whose historical origins remain obscure, and whose form and colour is not accounted for by European good taste, it both invites scrutiny and resists understanding; '[w]eird, strange and distorted', there is something inassimilable about the product of China, which, for Baudelaire, in a twist of conventional aesthetic judgement, is what guarantees its beauty.

In his late poem 'Lapis Lazuli' (1938), Yeats reprises the role of Baudelaire's alternative cosmopolitan through his poetic encounter with a small table-set-sized ornament from the East. Given that the poem begins in the mire of European politics, with the threat of war and the equally pernicious demand for poets to abandon their 'gaiety' in order to become

morally appropriate, the intrusion of a Chinese artefact is particularly striking. The associated shift in the poem's register signals both a reduction of scale – from the theatre of war to the poet's writing desk where the Lapis Lazuli ornament sits – and a more expansive gesture, an opening onto a non-European world.

Two Chinamen, behind them a third,
Are carved in lapis lazuli,
Over them flies a long-legged bird,
A symbol of longevity;
The third, doubtless a serving-man
Carries a musical instrument.

Although Yeats ventures a symbolic interpretation of the ornament, most fittingly associating the long-legged bird to longevity which reflects the object's ancient provenance in the East, this scholarly knowledge is soon overwritten as the encounter requires of the poet that he give up trying to fix its meaning. So it is in the final stanza of the poem that Yeats wills himself imaginatively into the depicted scene:

[. . .] I

Delight to imagine them [the Chinamen] seated there;
There, on the mountain and the sky,
On all the tragic scene they stare.
One asks for mournful melodies;
Accomplished fingers begin to play. (*VP* 566-7)

This poem's philosophical debt to Nietzsche is manifest: not only in its recapitulation of tragic gaiety in four out of five stanzas, but through the specific connection it makes between the theatrical mask and the non-European. In *The Birth of Tragedy* 'Greek cheerfulness'

derives from the expressive dramaturgy of East meets West. Nietzsche's determination to resist a conception of the Dionysian (Asiatic) spirit as a metaphysical consolation – that of a primitive naturalism – while yet permitting a reordering of the aesthetic realm according to the principle of Dionysian vitality, meant there was a need for the mask – a translation device – which allowed the Apollonian artist (the European subject) to *perform* his reunification with the primitive ectoplasm of culture. 'The mask' wrote Nietzsche, is 'a necessary effect of a glance into the inside and terrors of nature'.²⁸ This is to say, the mask brings the tragic actor face-to-face, not with an original unity, but with a strangeness within himself. The Dionysian aspect is not the spirit of homecoming, but of self-estrangement; and in this fashion the tragic actor is akin to Baudelaire's cosmopolitan poet, able to will his own surrender to a foreign object which lacks the necessary context to be apprehended as beautiful or historically meaningful. Indeed, will in the midst of surrender is the primer for Nietzsche's most well-known philosophical doctrines, 'the will to power', the eternal return, and *amor fati*. It is also implicit in Yeats's refrain for gaiety. Poets who are gay in the face of 'Aeroplane and Zeppelin' and the sinister *realpolitik* of 1930s Europe are deserving of praise in the poem, as are the tragic actors who do not 'break their lines to weep', and the hand workers of civilization who build monuments though they know they are bound to fall ('and they that build them again are gay' (*VP* 566)). Gaiety here is more than resilience in the face of hardship; rather, it is analogous with reckless creativity, a life principle at work in the face of politics, specifically European politics, which comes in this instance to be focalised through the artefact from the East.

Crucially, however, this ontological priority of life over politics is reaffirmed through an after-image of global trade. What is effectively Yeats's most primitive value – gaiety as poetic affirmation – is rediscovered through his encounter with the ghost of Baudelaire's commodity. The final stanza takes cognisance of this double aspect of the life of the object by foregrounding its contingency: it is a mere something on the poet's desk, even as it is framed as an ancient ideal.

Every discolouration of the stone,
Every accidental crack or dent,
Seems a water-course or avalanche,
Or lofty slope where it still snows [...] (*VP* 567)

What might be thought non-essential to the ornament's original identity, namely those features it accrues to itself by the act of transmission – 'discolouration', 'crack or dent' – become a critical part of its meaning. A theatre of semblance – what the object *seems* to be in the present time of its reception – hermeneutically connects the object's presumed origin to the form of its displacement such that there is an ironic continuity between what is ancient and ideal and what is new and accidental, between the scene beheld by the Chinamen's 'glittering eyes' and the modern heterogeneity implied by this strange distressed object situated without a proper historical context.

We can surely conclude that by his imaginative identification with his foreign ornament Yeats would satisfy Baudelaire's definition of the aesthetic cosmopolitan. But, as suggested above, the poetic disposition capable of discerning beauty in strange objects depends for its virtues on the circulation of the global commodity. Most obviously, if there were no global trade the poet would not have the opportunity to fall in love with his Chinese curiosity. More problematically, we might say that the qualities of strangeness which constitute the attractiveness of the object, and which seem particular to it, are in fact produced systematically by its displacement. It is a globalising system of asymmetric exchange that grants the poet access to the eastern commodity. Indeed the commodity relation, which Baudelaire discerned as the condition of modern poetry in the great world archives of the mid-nineteenth-century Exhibitions, is developed here by Yeats into poetry's internal reference.

The moment of aesthetic reception of global material, as well providing 'Lapis Lazuli's' economic context, provides its subject matter. This begins to reflect the glossarial self-consciousness we find in Yeatsian poetics more generally: the ways in which his poems

allude to and associate between multiple and diverse materials without providing much or any explanation of their provenance or historical context. His poem 'The Statues' is another standout example in this respect: a poem, as Michael North wittily remarks, which 'requires more commentary than it repays'.²⁹ Generously we might suggest that 'The Statues' reconstructs the classical European space by retracing how Pythagorean geometry and Phidias's statuary 'put down all vague Asiatic immensities' and created a European type of beauty. This genealogy, however, is only one strand of the poem's densely allusive fabric which pitches Alexander the Great's venture into India alongside an empty statue of the Buddha, the occult cat Grimalkin, Shakespeare's Hamlet – 'a fat / Dreamer from the Middle Ages' – and the Irish patriot Patrick Pearse. The result is a disorienting and generally superficial feeling for historical images deprived of their particular and differentiating contexts. Indeed, it is a poem which reduces historical particulars to the single movement of modernity which, in disaffected mood, the poet calls 'the filthy modern tide' (*VP* 610-11). The strong irony of Yeats's disaffection here is evidenced by the fact that his poem exemplifies the wave of commodification it ends by lamenting. We read a poem which projects different world materials into circulation within a single economy and permits a reflection, however abstract, about the hegemony of European aesthetic space and the subversive potential of eastern materials within it. Ultimately though, it reveals this subversive potential as reliant upon global commodification. We may develop North's observation that to pay attention to the poem's particular references is unrewarding with the realisation that a detailed exegesis of these particulars is beside the point. What the poem typifies, and what needs to be *read*, is the universalising gesture of the modern glossary. This glossarial aspect of modernity which Yeats has made an explicit theme of his poetry is furthermore intrinsic to its poetic medium, namely its language. Indeed, we must say that by staging the circulation of the eastern commodity 'Lapis Lazuli' and 'The Statues' can be taken as allegories of modern translation; and in this way they offer us a reflection on the disciplinary bind of English language literature as it *produces* global space.

The Monoglot as Translator

We have seen that Yeats did not consider himself a vernacular poet, though his advocacy of the living voice and a ‘passionate syntax’, often in opposition to the bookish culture of official English literature, made it seem as if he were. Yeats’s ‘translations’ have a similar *as if* quality because they only ever commune with the original through the already translated copy: the living voice of tradition was often also, whether through Irish, Bengali or Sanskrit, the *living* voice in translation.

We can find in Yeats’s occult and para-psychological investigations an instructive model for his practice of translation. Indeed, it is hardly surprising that ‘controls’ – spirits who choose to communicate with the living through a medium – originate in different parts of the world and speak in different tongues. Perhaps it even less surprising that they usually speak in those tongues understood by the participants in the séance. Accordingly, Yeats was unperturbed when at a séance in London a control spoke Norwegian because, thankfully, there were Norwegian speakers present in the room. Language became a more problematic issue, however, on the occasion when Renaissance writer and traveller Leo Africanus admonished Yeats (through the mediumship of renowned spiritualist Etta Wriedt) for his ignorance of the German language.³⁰ This was in 1912 when anti-German sentiment was on the rise in England and Africanus spoke from the fifteenth century to encourage Yeats to buck this unfortunate trend. Not simply Germano-phile, the bizarre Africanus also spoke English with an Irish accent – on others’ accounts, an accent not dissimilar to Yeats’s own. Wriedt was American, which added to the mystery of this strange communication. For the sceptic, such a mystery, if it can ever be said to exist, quickly dissolves: it is no miracle to speak German in someone else’s name if you already know the language (as Wriedt certainly did); nor is it unexpected that you might mimic the brogue of your most prestigious guest as a form of flattery. Certainly we cannot rule out the prospect that Wriedt may have sought to beguile the poet; as Yeats himself was wont to admit, mediums sometimes lie.³¹ But Yeats’s recorded

first impression that ‘Leo spoke like a stage Irishman’ suggests his encounter with the medium, and through her with Africanus, retains a significant poetic, if not purely mystical, interest.³²

Functioning effectively as a transmission technology, the spirit medium gives to the material she ‘receives’ its compressed rhetorical form, and in the process renders her own voice formally redundant. In the case of Wriedt’s channelling of Africanus, the living voice of a dead Moor whose first language would have been a dialect of Arabic, is transmitted in the form of an Irish-English vernacular. This emphasises not only the distance of the citation from its source, and the act of translation implicit in the process, but also the power of the medium to overwrite the source altogether: stage Irishness after all, Yeats’s own included, is a theatrical invention which points to its own lack of a stable referent. There is, then, a historical dimension discernable inside the séance room which relates to the broader task of translation. Here translation is a form of communing with the dead which nonetheless, through false notes and odd displacements, continually recognises the impossibility of a full communication across the metaphysical boundary between life and death. That this metaphysical boundary might have geopolitical resonance, marked in particular by the boundaries between different languages, is suggested from the innuendo of a missing, presumed dead, fifteenth-century Arabic language inscribed in a non-standard modern English. An intra-linguistic shift within English – from Wriedt’s American English to Irish English – with the accompanying sense of its rhetorical hollowness or theatricality is made to stand-in for an inarticulable act of historical assimilation. As no one present knows Arabic, so Africanus cannot even utter his own name except in English, and then only in a plastic Irish voice that belongs nowhere.

The idea that an Irish accent might stand in for a more exotic foreignness makes sense within a tradition of representation where the English-speaking Irishman is the enduring borderline case: the familiar stranger. The opposite idea is equally plausible, however, especially once Revivalist strategies of asserting Ireland’s cultural distinctiveness came to prominence in the late-nineteenth century: Ireland is too distinctively Irish, in tone as well as

in politics, to be anything except for itself. While the English cosmopolitan can speak from the anonymity of the centre, and administratively connect vastly different cultural peripheries, the Irish national is forever fated to collapse into self-identity. He wears his accent as the brand of his particularity. It is precisely this latter prejudice which informs the following review from *The Times* of Tagore's *The Post Office (Dak Ghar)* when performed by Yeats's Abbey Players at the Royal Court Theatre in London in July 1913:

Such expressions as 'awfully', 'jolly good', and 'shut up' contrast strangely with the beauty of most of Tagore's language without really seeming out of place. The part of the boy was played with much delicacy and pathos by Miss Lillian Jagoe. The other actors, though they did their best to represent Indian natives, remained always Irishmen. (11 July, 1913) (*PP* 167n)

The review concerns the play's second run, Yeats having given it its first English-language production in Dublin for the benefit of the masters and boys of the Irish-language school of St Enda's, then headed by Irish patriot and soon-to-be General Post Office martyr Patrick Pearse. The reviewer's conviction that conversational Englishisms did not seem out of place in an Indian play, whereas characteristic Irishness did, endorses the colonial fantasy: the Englishman belongs everywhere. On the contrary, the Irishman and the Indian have to be kept apart, lest they recognise their shared predicament. The fear that specific (semi-peripheral / peripheral) nationalisms might combine as a global anti-colonial strategy is implicit in such an attempt to reduce non-English national identities to a single untranslatable idiom. Tellingly, Yeats himself succumbed to this logic, promising Tagore in a letter that he would seek to remove those Irish accents that 'proved too strong'. As well he knew, international art was replete with such treacheries.

As Roy Foster has pointed out, in the wake of their first meeting in 1912 Yeats began using Tagore's Indianness – and the phenomenon of Tagore-enthusiasm which was just then flourishing in London – to escape a suffocating Irish nationalism. Writing to Lady Gregory

shortly after the Dublin performance of *The Post Office*, he admitted that a lecture he was delivering on Tagore's poetry was intended specifically to liberate him from 'the need of religious diplomacy.' He was referencing his series of disillusionments with Catholic Ireland, including those over the *Playboy* riots of 1907, the arguments about funding the National Gallery of Ireland, and the ongoing controversy of the *Playboy* tour in the United States. Diaspora audiences had greeted Synge's play with jeers and vociferous criticisms, reactivating Yeats's resolve against what he saw as nationalist piety linked to a sectional religious identity.³³ Using an Indian writer for Irish purposes to sublimate a North American fracas gives us a good idea of the extent of Yeats's internationalism.

What's more, it was an internationalism he shared with Tagore. The Bengali poet's campaign against the modern principle of 'organisation', exemplified by the egoic politics of nationalism, would lead him into public dispute with Ghandi's policy of economic non-cooperation in 1921. For Tagore, the idea that India might turn inwards and reject the seductions of the global economy ignored historical precedent: 'Sparta tried to gain strength by narrowing herself down to a particular purpose, but she did not win. Athens sought to attain perfection by opening herself out in all her fullness - and she did win'.³⁴ According to Tagore, this Athenian prowess augured the necessity of India's future openness to the West, and to America in particular – a country whose economic power was as yet unencumbered by the moral legacy of colonialism. Delivering a lecture on Indian nationalism in the USA in 1916, he praised America's 'nomadic restlessness' and her 'freedom of detachment' from Europe: 'America' he announced, 'is destined to justify western civilization to the East'.³⁵ In his attempt to chart a middle way between the 'colourless vagueness of cosmopolitanism' and 'the fierce self-idolatry of nation-worship', Tagore depicted the hybrid religious sensibility of an ideal India within the spirit of the New World. Correspondingly, when Yeats detected in the Indian poet an ancient religious spirit uncluttered by modern dogmas and sectarian identities, he was implicitly endorsing the economic principle of global circulation.

This principle of circulation can be seen in *The Post Office* itself, a play which tells the story of Amal, an adopted orphan who has been placed in quarantine. We find him

isolated in his home, though talking all the while with those who pass his window and precociously imagining the many places they had travelled. Like Paul Ruttledge in Yeats's *Where There is Nothing*, Amal invests the road with the magical property of being able to carry men beyond the visible horizon. As soon as he learns of the King's Post Office, however, the letter usurps the road as the symbol of his presiding obsession: 'Since the King's Post Office was put there I like more and more being indoors, and as I think I shall get a letter one day, I feel quite happy and then I don't mind being quiet and alone'.³⁶ Encouraged by a wandering fakir, Amal is convinced that one day he will receive his own letter addressed to him from the King. The play ends in deathly satisfaction: first the awaited letter arrives, though it is blank, a cruel joke from a local dignitary called Headman; then the King himself arrives at Amal's sickbed; before, finally, Amal goes on to die.

In his written introduction to the play, Yeats warns against reading it as a political allegory (*P&I* 144). But it is never clear which politics it might be said to allegorically describe, since the administrative structure of the post office, marking an absent sovereign, bears an uncomfortable resemblance to the British Empire. How in this case might we account for Amal's identification with the administration, his fidelity to the King, and that King's God-like visitation at the end of the play? Tagore was no apologist for British rule as his early involvement in the Swadeshi ('Our Country') movement would attest: *Swadeshi* was a Bengali Sinn Féin, according to his biographers.³⁷ But he was enduringly fascinated – and here through a child's eyes – with modern modes of global transmission. 'Modernism' he wrote in his lectures on nationalism, is 'freedom of the mind', 'independence of thought and action', and 'science' as they could be found in the West, but without the straitjackets of European taste, education or architecture. Accordingly, Tagore emphasised Amal's openness to the world in his own readings of *The Post Office*.³⁸ On this account, the deferral of the King's arrival is the most important aspect of the play: during the time it takes Amal's spiritual hunger for the world to grow a territorial conception of sovereignty is suspended. The naivety and religious simplicity which Yeats was wont to encourage others to discern in Tagore's work is allied to this Indian-Athenian 'openness' which Tagore discerned in Amal.

Tagore, the emissary of ancient wisdom, was himself an intrepid and worldly post-office agent as much as a specifically Indian subject. And although this transmittable character left Tagore's eastern-ness, as it had Yeats's Irishness, vulnerable to accusations of inauthenticity, it yet provided an important model of literary capital which gestured an escape from the influence of the colonial centre through mobility of reference.

It is a matter of record that Tagore's original translation of his own verse collection *Gitanjali*, from Bengali into English, was to some degree revised by Yeats for publication in 1912. Tagore admitted the debt in a letter to Rothenstein in 1915, allowing that 'Yeats's touches [had] made it possible for *Gitanjali* to occupy the place it does [in *English* literature]'.³⁹ However, the manuscript which Yeats had 'touched' was soon lost by Tagore, and to posterity: a possible indication of Tagore's desire to wrest back some of the credit he felt he might have given away. Since Yeats's declarations on the matter were only ever vague, the spirit of his intervention is more easily discerned than its detail. In the following 1913 letter to Tagore, Yeats offers an untypically particular remark on *Gitanjali* which flowers into a more general thought on translation:

The other day I started to read out no.52 [of *Gitanjali*] to a friend. When I came to the last paragraph I was most sorrowful to find that magnificent 'no more coyness and sweetness of demeanour' was changed and the whole poem half-ruined. I fell on Rothenstein at once and accused that Fox Strangeways of it. He defends Fox Strangeways but I do not believe him. The Amateur is never to be trusted. My father struck up a friendship with an Italian artist who had only one sentence of English (my father knew no Italian) 'O the Amateurs aren't they nasty'. My father and the Italian coaxed one another for a week and saw one another daily in each other's studios on the foundation of this sentence. They used to point to their pictures, I believe, when that one profound thought was not enough. (*PP* 146-7)

In the first flush of his acquaintance with Tagore's work, Yeats would often publicly recite in various London drawing rooms translated fragments from *Gitanjali*, finding within them the living voice of an ancient tradition. It was therefore apt that it was while he engaged in reading the published text aloud to a friend that he discovered the lamentable lapse – a sudden death – in the poem's language. The impression Yeats gives here is that 'the amateurs' – and he fingers part-time translator Fox Strangeways for the role – had further revised his revision of Tagore's original manuscript. Indeed the 'magnificent' line he quotes 'no more coyness and sweetness of demeanour' reads as 'no more shy and soft demeanour' in the Indian Society Edition he had happened to pick up and read. It is testament to Yeats's influence – or at the very least to Tagore and Rothenstein's willingness to appease the Irish poet's vanity – that in the later 1913 Macmillan edition the line is changed back to accord with Yeats's taste. Does Yeats's specific preference here tell us anything more general about the nature of his interventions? We might say that Yeats's line by choosing 'coy' instead of 'shy' has a harder tone: the speaker is calling out a lover's stratagem (stop being coy!) rather than issuing encouragement (don't be shy). But surely it is only the narcissism of small differences which has Yeats so exerted on behalf of one of these phrasings over another. More fruitfully we might consider the anecdote with which Yeats continues his letter to Tagore. The 'spiritual commerce' between his father and the Italian painter has two basic conditions: an agreed dislike of amateurism, and an ability to gesture towards one's own creation. In fact, the gestural language of pointing to accomplished artworks derives from the consensus on amateurism since we are allowed to imagine the 'nasty' amateur as someone for whom pedantry inhibits a finished style. Whereas the two artists coax each other productively in their ignorance, the amateur, whose knowledge might even extend to linguistic proficiency, is certainly incapable of artistic production. The instruction implicit in Yeats's letter, then, is that translations are to be justified according to their style, rather than their accuracy. What's more, in the case of *Gitanjali*, it is Yeats himself, entirely ignorant of Bengali, who is capable both of recognising its style and, somewhat paradoxically, of ensuring that it has 'style'. To

put it another way, it is he who ensures that its ancient living voice is still living in modern *English*.

Over the two years of 1912 and 1913 Yeats and Tagore consistently celebrated each other's work: Yeats wrote introductions for both *Gitanjali* (1912) and *The Post Office* (1913), while Tagore published a laudatory essay on Yeats (translated in *The American Review of Reviews* in 1914) and dedicated his volume *The Gardener* (1913) to the Irish poet. Tagore also wrote from Urbana Illinois of being 'haunted' by a performance he had seen of *Cathleen Ni Houlihan* (PP 163n). However, on being asked to contribute a foreword to a new scholarly study of Tagore in 1924, Yeats refused (PP 174-5n). Although there is no recorded animosity between the two poets, and they continued a sporadic correspondence into the 1930s, it is fair to say that their relationship cooled. Yeats lamented that Tagore had 'spoilt his own market in England': 'He should have published no more verses in translation after the first three volumes which were revised' (PP 174-5n). Yeats's 'coaxings' or interventions which had exercised a vital check on Tagore's expressive faculty are upheld as essential: without expert 'revision' Tagore's prolific output in English had become too open and undisciplined, which, for Yeats, contravened the demands of style. At his worst, according to Yeats, Tagore had become guilty of producing 'sentimental rubbish' derived from his insistence that he 'knew' English. 'Tagore does not know English, no Indian knows English' he asseverated to Rothenstein, as late as 1935 (L 835). 'Knowing' English in this sense, for Yeats, meant having a capacity for creating an English style. Doubtless Tagore had mastered English grammar but, in those many non-revised translations which succeeded *Gitanjali* and *The Gardener*, he had not managed to accomplish 'great poetry' in English.

There is a knot at the heart of Yeats's position here concerning an English style which infers a language other than English: namely that the discrimination of poetic value – a discrimination Tagore's work is said to have lost – is conditional upon a formal indiscrimination inherent in the act of translation. In other words, the accomplishment of a translated style in English derives from a prior distortion of non-English style. Yeats in his introduction to *Gitanjali* admits as much: 'These lyrics – which are in the original, my Indians

tell me, full of subtlety of rhythm, of untranslatable delicacies of colour, of metrical invention – display in their thought a world I have dreamed of all my life long’ (*E&I* 390). Presumably because he is himself a poet with accomplished artworks of his own to which he can gesture, Yeats does not worry as an amateur might about what is ‘untranslatable’ – perhaps, indeed, it is intrinsic to the poetic spirit to notate such untranslatableability. *Gitanjali*’s poetic thought is present to Yeats in its dream-like simplicity, even as he recognises that beyond such simplicity a more primitive complexity has been abandoned. This drift from traditional prosody in a non-English language to a poetic prose in English (the English version of *Gitanjali* is written as a series of ‘prose poems’) has consequences for how we understand what Yeats calls ‘good taste’. ‘Four-fifths of our energy is spent in the quarrel with bad taste’ he tells us in his introduction, connecting Nietzschean aristocratism to the values he has found in Tagore’s work (*E&I* 389). And yet his discrimination of good taste in *Gitanjali*, celebrates the common English edition of the poems which he himself, in absolute ignorance of their original Bengali rhythms and sounds, has helped to prepare.

Predictably enough, a relevant precedent for Yeats’s judgement on what constitutes ‘great poetry’ can be found within the discourse of Celticism, most specifically in Matthew Arnold’s significant dismissal of Celtic prosody in favour of the Celtic ‘note’:

the *architectonicé* which shapes great works, such as Agamemnon or the Divine Comedy, comes only after a steady, deep-searching survey, a firm conception of the facts of human life, which the Celt has not patience for. So he runs off into technic, where he employs the utmost elaboration, and attains astonishing skill; but in the contents of his poetry you have only so much interpretation of the world as the first dash of a quick, strong perception, and then sentiment, infinite sentiment, can bring you.⁴⁰

Celtic art is notable for its skill and the elaboration of its technique, suggests Arnold, yet the Celt has not produced great works of art except where his genius has contributed to works

written in English. In other words, specific non-English prosodic traditions must be abandoned in order that poetry in English can interpret 'the world'. Following on from this it will be important not to confuse two thoughts. Arnold's conviction is that poetic technique as the natural complement to Celtic sentiment inhibits the realism necessary for 'great works'. From this perspective, technique is a problem within the Celtic character which can only be resolved by externalising it in its relation to other racial and linguistic characters, namely the Saxon and English. It is only once the compulsions of technique in the Welsh or Irish languages have been transformed into a partial note within a greater English-language composite that great 'Celtic' works of art such as those of Shakespeare or Keats are possible. The second, related, but distinct thought is that works written in Celtic languages lack access to the modern world because they are not modern world languages, and therefore cannot be 'great' in stature. The English language is a medium of global modernity but also one of its primary objects; therefore to write in English is to possess the advantage of a world-historical subject matter. This second position lacks the moralistic pulse of Arnold's argument in which the Celtic subject *should* politically evolve into the world. Rather, from this perspective, it is historical and political contingency which creates an unequal relation between English and other languages. It seems to me that while Yeats eschews the implicit moralism of Arnold's position, he endorses the view that 'great poetry' in modern English derives from its world-historical advantage over other non-English language cultures. Irish, Welsh or Bengali poetry might be great in their own 'untranslatable' terms, but in terms of modern world literature it is *how* their differences are inscribed *within* English that matters. Historical collisions between cultures require a modern poetic form, even as it is a form which necessarily entails the usurpation of established formal and prosodic strictures.

This abandonment of traditional prosodic forms touches upon Moretti's problematic of 'a world literary system [. . .] whose main mechanism of change is convergence'. Indeed, any suspicion that the major studies of world literature focus on the novel at the expense of poetry might well be explained by the fact that the role of translation within modern English literature necessitates a turn towards prose: if the history of the nation was poetic, then the

history of the world is prosaic. Yeats's consideration of Milton's prosody discussed above corresponds with this inclination insofar as it separates the speaking of 'vivid' English from what Yeats considered to be the traditional English prosody. Modern English in this instance for Yeats is a 'passionate *prose*' which cuts across the traditional line. Not only does this rehabilitation of English poetic forms estrange English literature from itself, but it marks an important relation between English literature shedding its formal 'Englishness' and the possibility of modern poetry. The implicit question of how poetic value might be sustained in conditions of transnational commerce leads to a further, more definitively modernist query: how can literature translated into English become *original* English literature?

Tagore's *Gitanjali* was published in English several times in the years that followed the first edition which Yeats introduced, making it an exemplar of modern world literature in English. So much so, in fact, that Tagore was the first non-European winner of the Nobel Prize in 1913. If this offered proof to Yeats of the living spirit of an ancient tradition, then its mobility also presented a crisis of literary style. The very same openness that allowed Yeats to adopt for his own ends *Gitanjali*'s traditional imagery and eastern simplicity was, as Tagore's subsequent career would bear out, in danger of producing a total indifference to form and just the kind of modern anomie Yeats associated with free verse. The task which remained implicit for Yeats, from his earliest folklore to his last cultural pamphlets, was that of asserting a topography of meaningful differences within English literature as a way to inscribe linguistic differences which had already been obscured, such as those between Irish and English, Bengali and English, and so on.

We can turn now to Yeats's engagement with the Japanese Noh theatre to explore this same problematic as it emerged within a different perspective. By stating with confidence that Ernest Fenollosa's translations from Japanese would help him 'to explain a certain possibility of the Irish dramatic movement', the poet raises once more the question concerning what form exotic languages might take in modern English.⁴¹ Our reference here should be not only to the dramaturgical innovations of Yeats's Irish Noh plays, *At The Hawk's Well*, *The Only*

Jealousy Of Emer and *The Dreaming of the Bones* collected in *Four Plays for Dancers* (1921), but also to his ‘Suggestions and Corrections’ to Ezra Pound’s version of Fenollosa’s Noh Manuscripts.⁴² Yoko Chiba has pointed out the extent of Yeats’s influence on Pound’s revisions of the Fenollosa manuscript, evidenced both in its terminology and in passages of ‘pseudo-Irish or Syngean speech’.⁴³ Not only can we find in Pound’s work such Yeatsian words as ‘séance’, ‘magic’, ‘ritual’ and ‘Sidhe’ (the Irish word for fairies), all of which emphasised the cultural parallelism which Yeats was invested in exploiting, but also distinctively Irish speech patterns, as evident from the following extract from the play *Kayoi Komachi*:

And *there’s* an odd little woman *comes* here every day with fruit and fuel

That’s *queer*. I asked her her name ... then she’s gone *like a mist*.

There’s a *heap of good* in your prayers.

I had my own rain of tears; that was the dark night, *surely*.

This night is the *longing fulfilled*. (Chiba’s emphases)⁴⁴

The Hiberno-English notes are unmistakeable even if, as Chiba suggests, Pound further overlaid this idiom with a confected Japanese English and a new montage style which leaves intact certain onomatopoeic effects from the Japanese: ‘Kiri, hatari, cho, cho, / Kiri, hatari, cho, cho, / The cricket sews on at his own rags, / With all the new grass in the field; sho / Churr, isho, like the whirr of a loom; churr.’⁴⁵ By compressing Fenollosa’s original translation, which had included more extended explanations of meaning, Pound gives the lie to the idea of a correspondence between two complete languages: an original Japanese text and an appropriate English translation. Rather, the English is never simply English and the Japanese consistently manipulated according to the principles of Pound’s poetic style. We know that Pound would go on to flaunt these glossarial poetics in *The Cantos*, both by including bibliographic detail within his poetry (most famously in the first Canto, (‘Andrea Divus, In officina Wecheli, 1538, out of Homer’)⁴⁶ and by retaining in their untranslated

forms Chinese characters or ideograms. Our particular interest here is in the role Yeats's Irish-English plays in preparing the way for this degree of experimentation. Once more the intra-linguistic difference from English-English to Irish-English implies the greater work of translation from Japanese to English that has already been accomplished. In this way the Irish accent might be considered the sign for linguistic mobility itself. It is also, however, a sticking point: too resolutely situated within the political landscape of the United Kingdom to suggest true freedom of movement. Accordingly, T.S. Eliot when reviewing the Pound's Noh wrote that the Irishisms in the text constituted 'lapses': 'One feels that the original is not rendered because the translation is not English.'⁴⁷ Expressing a similar sentiment to that recorded by the *Times* reporter reviewing *The Post Office* noted above, Eliot betrays his scholarly Anglophilia, but also a degree of cosmopolitan complacency. What is 'English' in the context of its rendering of another language? Suggested by Eliot's critique is the idea of an official literary English – definitely not Irish-English – with the ability to canonise particular translations such that we can say of them the original has been properly 'rendered'. However, this co-dependency of official literary English and the Japanese original, is largely absent from Pound's attempts to adapt Fenollosa's project, as well as from Yeats's experiments with the Noh form where the imperative is not to get Japanese originals into English, but to use Japanese forms as a way to translate aspects of Irish experience into the English language. Such a triangulation of cultural imaginaries prohibits a simple relation between the linguistic and formal authority of English and the fixed content of Japanese tradition.

As suggested earlier in this chapter, Yeats's adaptations of Noh theatre were inventive: he appropriated from Japan both the theatrical convention of the mask, and the device of the *Shite* (the human figure who reappears also a ghost); but in scenery, structure and language his *Four Plays for Dancers* (1921) are self-consciously impure. *At The Hawk's Well*, set in 'The Irish Heroic Age', opens with a stage direction that strikes a note of provisionality and experimentation: 'Indeed, I think, so far as my present experience goes, that the most effective lighting is the lighting we are accustomed to in our rooms. These

masked players seem stranger when there is no mechanical means of separating them from us' (*VPI* 398-9). The strange is stranger still, the author advises, when we see it closely without any special effects. Then, at the other side of an opening chorus, the same stage direction continues, now anthropological in tone, by explaining a non-standard language usage: 'The words "a speckled shin" are familiar to readers of Irish legendary stories in descriptions of old men bent double over the fire' (*VPI* 400). Thus, within two pages of the first of Yeats's Noh plays, we have been given an overarching sense of the cultural overdetermination at work. The same overdetermination is condensed into a single line in *The Dreaming of the Bones*: we are told that 'A Young Man enters, praying in Irish' (*VPI* 763). The apparent specificity of a man praying in Irish in 1916 (the stated circumstance of the play being the aftermath of the Dublin Rising) is particularly arresting as it seems to interrupt, with reference to national politics, an exemplary exercise of spiritual internationalism, namely, the capture of Japanese culture by English literature. In truth, however, the incongruity of hearing Irish spoken in a piece of English-language Noh theatre remains an exaggerated gesture: it cannot help but become a performative metonym for the more general drift of estrangement at work in the play's aesthetic: neither Irish, nor Japanese, nor truly English. Yeats's apparently conservative choice to use English blank verse to voice his major characters' speech operates in a similar fashion: although an enduring form of English prosody, the pentameter line is nonetheless contextually estranged from itself, especially from those English poetic traditions with which it is historically associated – and, hence, from the corresponding idea of a 'natural' English voice. A traditional English form expressing Irish characters within a Japanese dramaturgical structure lends credence to the poet's later claim that even what he alters 'must seem traditional' (*E&I* 522): what at first seems reducible to a single tradition has to be read for the heterogeneity it disguises.

This same drift of estrangement also manifests itself at the level of plot. *The Only Jealousy of Emer* dramatizes the protagonist's reckoning with Cuchullain's adulteries: not only must Emer accept her husband's sexual adventurism but she must, in order to preserve his life, renounce her hope that his true love remains at home with her. In *The Dreaming of*

the Bones it is the adulterous love of Diarmuid and Dervorgilla which the protagonist, a young patriot on the run in the wake of the Rising, is asked to forgive. Diarmuid mac Murchadha is the infamous trespasser whose illicit affair with Dervorgilla forced him into an alliance with Henry II and indirectly sanctioned the first English invasions of Ireland in the twelfth century. 'I had almost yielded and forgiven it all' the young man muses to himself at the end of the play, after encountering Diarmuid and Dervorgilla's ghosts who have endured the punishment of not being able to touch for seven hundred years (*VPI* 775). Both of these plays present a scene of fundamental ambivalence as the claims of love are deemed inextricable from those of betrayal and pollution, and exile from nation and spouse becomes an indicator of delight as well as of remorse. In this regard, they dramatically bear out their linguistic and compositional histories.

A final example of Yeats's place in the development of a world English style can be found in his 1937 'translation' of *The Ten Principal Upanishads*. Yeats admits his debt to his co-author Shri Purohit Swāmi in the introduction. 'This book', he says, is 'twice as much his as mine, for he knows Sanskrit and English, I but English'.⁴⁸ The poet claims his share, however, and does not allow remorse to swallow his delight in representing the task of translating one of the masterpieces of world literature:

More than once I asked him [Shri Purohit Swāmi] the name of some translator and even bought the book, but the most eminent scholars left me incredulous. Could Latinised words, hyphenated words; could polyglot phrases, sedentary distortions of unnatural English - 'However many Gods in Thee, All-knower, adversely slay desires of a person' - could middles muddled by 'Lo! Verily' and 'Forsooth', represent what grass farmers say thousands of years ago, what their descendants sing today? So when I met Shri Purohit Swāmi I proposed that we go to India and make a translation that would reward as though the English had

been written in common English: ‘To write well’, said Aristotle, ‘express yourself like the common people, but think like a wise man’.⁴⁹

Yeats, then in his 70s, didn’t go to India. What’s more, his thought here regarding ‘common English’ and the relation between commonality and wisdom is distinctively Wordsworthian, to the extent we might imagine he had forgotten his censure upon Wordsworth’s lack of theatricality and style. Importantly, however, this ‘common’ English, set to replace the Victorian English represented by ‘Lo Verily!’ and ‘Forsooth’, will comprise an idiom self-consciously translated from Sanskrit. In other words, the plan is to invent a ‘common’ English applicable to no particular locale – and spoken by no particular person. The paradox of Yeats’s endeavour here derives both from an historical association of Celtic literature and *translatorese* (for example, the invented English idiom of MacPherson’s Ossian poems) and an imagined English-language audience extending well beyond England and into the economies of the New World.

The following two translations of the same textual moment from the *Upanishads* – the first from noted philologist F. Max Müller, the second from Yeats and Shri Purohit – suggest how Yeats imagined his ‘common’ and international English evolving:

Katha-upanishad

First Adhyâya

First Vallî

1. Vâgasravasa, desirous (of heavenly rewards), surrendered (at a sacrifice) all that he possessed. He had a son of the name of Nakiketas.
2. When the (promised) presents were being given (to the priests), faith entered into the heart of Nakiketas, who was still a boy, and he thought: unblessed surely, are the words to which a man goes by giving (as his promised present at a sacrifice) cows which have drunk water, eaten hay, given their milk and are barren.

3. He (knowing that his father has promised to give up all that he possessed, and therefore his sons also said to his father: ‘Dear father, to whom wilt thou give me? He said it a second and a third time. Then the father replied (angrily): ‘I shall give thee onto Death’. (F. Max Müller)⁵⁰

From the Kathak Branch of the Wedas (Katha-Upanishad)

Wājashrawas, wanting heaven, gave away all his property.

He had a son by name Nachiketas. While the gifts were passing, Nachiketas, though but a boy, thought to himself:

‘He has not earned much of heaven; his cows can neither eat, drink, calve nor give milk’. He went to his father and said: ‘Father, have you given me to somebody? He repeated the question a second and a third time; at last his father said: ‘I give you to Death’. (Yeats and Shri Purohit Swāmi)⁵¹

What distinguishes the Yeats and Shri Purohit version from Müller’s is its presumptuousness. Showing no need for parenthetical explanation and with a clear emphasis on brevity and simplicity, their edition compresses the scholarly apparatus which we might expect to accompany such a technical feat of translation. Theirs is not a translation into English from another language, but an original production of world English. As we saw Yeats both avail of and erase the Irish language scholarship of Mangan and Hyde in the last chapter, so here the stereographical qualities remain implicit in a composite text of beguiling simplicity. Although it is not written in verse, its gnomic qualities are yet designed to rescue it from scholarly prose. Significantly, there is little or no trace of an Irish vernacular. We have seen from Eliot’s review of Pound’s *Noh* and the *Times* journalist’s review of Tagore’s *The Post Office* how the Irish voice had been considered aesthetically constraining because of its political identifications – and this surely played its part in Yeats’s evolving style. But we might say that a Celtic note persists nonetheless in the poet’s ‘common’ World English: if not its cadence then its innuendo. What resonates in this non-particular English, emptied of its

philological exactitude, is a gestural theatre of difference familiar from the politics of Celticism, but now further displaced and mobilised for the greater and ‘popular’ world economy.

¹ Rabindranath Tagore, *Gitanjali – Song offerings: A collection of prose translations made by the author from the original Bengali*, with an Introduction by W.B. Yeats (London: Royal India and Pakistan Society, 1912); (Trans.) Ernest Fenollosa and Ezra Pound, *Certain Noble Plays of Japan* (Churchtown, Ireland: Cuala Press, 1916); (Trans.) Ernest Fenollosa and Ezra Pound, *Noh or Accomplishment: A Study of the classical Stage of Japan* (London: Macmillan 1916); (Put into English by) Shri Purohit Swāmi and W.B. Yeats, *The Ten Principal Upanishads* (London: Faber and Faber, 1937).

² Quoted in Casanova, *The World Republic of Letters*, 14.

³ Moretti, ‘Evolution, World-Systems, *Weltliteratur*’, *Distant Reading*, 134.

⁴ ‘I owe my soul to Shakespeare, to Spenser, and to Blake, perhaps to William Morris, and to the English language in which I think, speak and write [. . .]; my hatred tortures me with love, my love with hate’ (*E&I* 519).

⁵ Emily Apter, *Against World Literature: On the Politics of Untranslatability* (London, New York: Verso, 2013), 10.

⁶ Robert Crawford, ‘The Scottish Invention of English Literature’ *Devolving English Literature* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991) 16-44.

⁷ Crawford, ‘Anthropology and Dialect’, *Devolving English Literature*, 111-175.

⁸ Crawford, *Devolving English Literature*, 118.

⁹ George Moore accounts for Yeats lack of vernacular writing in the following passage: ‘Yeats answered that even in Shakespeare’s time people were beginning to talk of the decline of language. No language, he said, was ever so grammatical as Latin, yet the language died; perhaps from excess of grammar. It is with idiom and not with grammar that the literary artist should concern himself; and, stroking his thin yellow hands slowly, he looked into the midnight fire, regretting he had no gift to learn living speech from those who knew it—the peasants’. Moore, ‘Ave’, *Hail and Farewell*, 84.

¹⁰ Matthew Harte, *Nations of Nothing But Poetry: Modernism, Transnationalism, and Synthetic Vernacular Writing* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 9.

¹¹ William Wordsworth *Selected Prose*. Ed. J Hayden (London: Penguin Classics, 1988), 281-2.

¹² Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria; or Biographical Sketches of My Literary Life and Opinions*. (London: Elibron Classics Series, 2004), 163.

¹³ Marjorie Perloff, ‘Yeats and Goethe’ *Comparative Literature* 23.2. (1971), 125-140: 128.

¹⁴ Michael Golston, *Rhythm and Race in Modernist Poetry and Science* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 92.

¹⁵ In a late letter to the designer Edmund Dulac, Yeats declared that all his life he had been following Goethe, the guiding star of *Weltliteratur*, in trying ‘to get rid of modern subjectivity by insisting on

construction and contemporary words and syntax' (L 892). However, the vital question of *where* in the world 'contemporary' English words and syntax come from hangs tantalisingly in the air.

¹⁶ In his now famous 'Author's Preface' Hopkins wrote specifically of Milton as the great master of 'counterpoint rhythm' which is the reversal of the expected stress pattern in a conventional foot written in 'common English rhythm'. Gerard Manley Hopkins, *Poems of Gerard Manley Hopkins*. Ed. Robert Bridges. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1918), 3.

¹⁷ Edward Said, *Freud and the Non-European* (London, New York: Verso, 2014), 24.

¹⁸ Maud Gonne and W.B. Yeats, *The Gonne-Yeats Letters 1893-1938*. Ed. A. N. Jeffares and A. MacBride, (London: Hutchinson, 1992), 293-4.

¹⁹ Quoted in Roy Foster, *The Apprentice Mage*, 470.

²⁰ (Put into English by) Shri Purohit Swāmi and W.B. Yeats, *The Ten Principal Upanishads*, 11.

²¹ Yoko Chiba, 'Ezra Pound's Versions of Fenollosa's Noh Manuscripts and Yeats's Unpublished "Suggestions and Corrections"', *Yeats Annual* 4, (1986): 121-145: 125.

²² Masaru Sekine and Christopher Murray, *Yeats and the Noh: A Comparative Study* (Gerrards Cross: Colin Smyth, 1990), xiv.

²³ Michael Hamburger, *The Truth of Poetry: Tensions in Modernist Poetry since Baudelaire* (London: Anvil Press Poetry 1996 [1968]) 115.

²⁴ Charles Baudelaire, 'The Exposition Universelle' in *Art in Paris 1845 – 1862: Salons and Other Exhibitions Reviewed by Charles Baudelaire*. Trans J. Mayne (Oxford: Phaidon Press, 1981), 124.

²⁵ Baudelaire, 'The Exposition Universelle', 121.

²⁶ Baudelaire, 'The Exposition Universelle', 122.

²⁷ Baudelaire, 'The Exposition Universelle', 122.

²⁸ Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, 67.

²⁹ Michael North, *The Political Aesthetic*, 69.

³⁰ (Ed.) Steve Adams and George Mills Harper, 'The Manuscript of "Leo Africanus"', *Yeats Annual* 1, (1982), 1-47: 10.

³¹ 'Because mediumship is dramatisation, even honest mediums cheat at times either deliberately or because some part of the body has freed itself from the control of the waking will, and almost always truth and lies are mixed together' (*Ex* 365).

³² (Ed.) Steve Adams and George Mills Harper, 'The Manuscript of "Leo Africanus"', 6.

³³ Roy Foster, *The Apprentice Mage*, 483.

³⁴ Quoted in Krishna Dutta and Andrew Robinson, *Rabindranath Tagore: The Myriad-Minded Man*, 240-1.

³⁵ Rabindranath Tagore, *Nationalism* (London: Macmillan, 1917), 104.

³⁶ Rabindranath Tagore, *The Post Office*. Trans. Devebrata Mukerjea Madras (Bombay; Calcutta: Macmillan India, 1914, 1968), 59.

³⁷ Krishna Dutta and Andrew Robinson, *Rabindranath Tagore: The Myriad-Minded Man*, 141.

³⁸ Krishna Dutta and Andrew Robinson, *Rabindranath Tagore: The Myriad-Minded Man*, 159.

³⁹ Tagore to Rothenstein, 4 Sept. 1915, *Imperfect Encounters: Letters of William Rothenstein and Rabindranath Tagore 1911-1941*. Ed. M.M. Lago (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard, 1972), 195. Quoted in Roy Foster, *The Apprentice Mage*, 473.

⁴⁰ Arnold, *On the Study of Celtic Literature*, 345.

⁴¹ W.B. Yeats 'Introduction' to *Certain Noble Plays of Japan* (Churchtown, Ireland: Cuala Press, 1916).

⁴² W.B. Yeats, *Four Plays for Dancers*, (London: Macmillan, 1921).

⁴³ Yoko Chiba, 'Ezra Pound's Versions of Fenollosa's Noh Manuscripts and Yeats's Unpublished "Suggestions and Corrections"', *Yeats Annual* 4 (1986), 127.

⁴⁴ Quoted in Yoko Chiba, 'Ezra Pound's Versions of Fenollosa's Noh Manuscripts and Yeats's Unpublished "Suggestions and Corrections"', 128.

⁴⁵ Quoted in Yoko Chiba, 'Ezra Pound's Versions of Fenollosa's Noh Manuscripts and Yeats's Unpublished "Suggestions and Corrections"', 132.

⁴⁶ Ezra Pound, *The Cantos*, 5.

⁴⁷ Yoko Chiba, 'Ezra Pound's Versions of Fenollosa's Noh Manuscripts and Yeats's Unpublished "Suggestions and Corrections"', 127-8.

⁴⁸ (Put into English by) Shri Purohit Swāmi and W.B. Yeats, *The Ten Principal Upanishads*, 7.

⁴⁹ (Put into English by) Shri Purohit Swāmi and W.B. Yeats, *The Ten Principal Upanishads*, 7-8.

⁵⁰ (Trans.) F Max Müller, *The Upanishads* (Oxford: Clarendon press, 1884), 1.

⁵¹ (Put into English by) Shri Purohit Swāmi and W.B. Yeats, *The Ten Principal Upanishads*, 25.